

THE SECRET WITNESS

By George Gibb Author of 'The Yellow Dove'

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CHAPTER XXI (Continued)
"Benwick made a gesture of incomprehension, wondering meanwhile how he could kill the man on the landing platform without attracting attention."

"The train from the south was crowded today," said Spivak in German.

"You come from Brod or Britzka?"

"From Britzka," said Benwick with hesitation, and then with the countenance of desperation.

"Have you seen me before?" he went on, looking at Spivak with a steady gaze.

"Your name is Spivak—the secret name?"

"My name is Carl Meyer."

"You are Carl Meyer? I must have seen you," he muttered. "I have been in Vienna, in Italy, in Hungary, in all parts of the Hungarian branch. You have been in Sarajevo?"

"Yes," said Benwick, easily following out a wild plan that had come into his mind. "I have been employed by the Austrian government to find the Countess Mariliska Strahl."

"Ah, I see. It has come to that. And then, regarding his conversation with a new interest. 'When did you come from Sarajevo?'"

"Last night. It is a strange case."

"And you have found a lead?"

"Several."

"You do not do anything against such a man as Gortz?"

"It is Gortz—yes—but I will find her. I have to go through Germany with a passport."

"They have not gone to Germany, my friend. Every man of your country has been closed to them since the assassination."

"Benwick smiled. The thing had worked. The spirit of the venture glowed in him—its very impudence fascinated him."

"Perhaps his conversation with you who could not be killed by Sarajevians?"

"Spivak caught him suddenly by the arm. 'But Benwick, you are not a Sarajevian?'"

"You think he killed Sarajevians?"

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He calmly boarded a steamer

"It will be risky."

"No, unless you make it so. With luck you shall hear a letter to General Lehotzky which you need never deliver as a writer for a newspaper."

"I hope—believe me confident."

"Benwick smiled. 'Her Koulas was something of a humorist. She told me more of this Neudeck case,' said the Englishman."

"There is unfortunately little more to tell. Neudeck was a German baron with military connections, not too rich and not above dishonesty. Gortz traced the plans to assassinate Sarajevians, an ancient feud which an elder Baron Neudeck had bought."

"In the Duka—where some Russian officers were invited for the shooting. They did not know how little they were to enjoy it—Koulas chuckled and blew a cloud of smoke—for Gortz shot Neudeck before their very eyes, and took the plans back to Germany. This is secret history—a nine days' wonder—and it passed and with it a clever scoundrel who had conspired what he got."

"And since his death, who lives in Schloss Solnik?"

"I don't know. He laughed again. 'You must verify rapidly at conclusions, my friend.'"

"Time passes. I must jump at something. I am going to Duka. Pass—tomorrow, if you will help me."

"That goes without saying. For the present you shall go to bed and sleep soundly. You would like to go with you, but alas! I am not so young as I was and I can best serve all your interests by staying here."

Benwick shook Koulas by the hand and took the bedroom candle that was offered to him.

"Good night," he said. "I pray that no harm may come to you from this trip."

"Do not worry, my friend. I am well lodged with alibis. Good night."

The next evening after dark Benwick, wearing a Max Schott of the Wiener Zeitung, supplied with a pass which Herr Koulas, by means of his underground machinery, had already taken care to reach in the early morning of the following day, was on his way to Duka.

At the terminus of the railroad, a small and ancient town under the very shadow of the mountain, he made arrangements to stop at the afternoon, he found the Hungarians, the hotel to which he had been directed, were in a state of commotion. The birds were covered with cuts and bruises. Every one of them was slumped as though he had been in a real battle.

Maybe the birds could have whipped them, after all. But even so, it would be a costly victory. The birds were covered with cuts and bruises. Every one of them was slumped as though he had been in a real battle.

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THE DAILY NOVELETTE

"Where Potatoes Grew" By Margaret M. Keenan

IN ONE bend of the swift-flowing, snake-like River Merrimack, could be found a little town named after the river. The town was insignificant enough in name, and would have been more so, had not nature taken a hand in the matter. Her swaying, sweeping willows, radiating fields of wheat and corn, gentle, nodding bluebells; crimson walls of Virginia marguerites and brown-eyed Susans were enough to inspire, not alone artists, but any one going that way. In such a place one would expect to find rural people, and such they were. These quiet, loving, country folk were to be left to their own devices and theories for long, once John Berry caught sight of the little ivy-walled cottage in the valley overlooking the river.

"Peace's throne was usurped," indignantly declared the old man, who had little town hall many an evening, discussing John and his, or what they thought, preposterous idea of potato growing. Yet they had to put up with it.

It was a balmy midsummer twilight when from across the road could be seen the dim outline of some one merrily whistling, evidently watching one of the farmers transplant something under two eyes grow wistful when he heard something.

"Don't imagine around here grow potatoes? I should think they grow grow grow."

"Bah, potatoes!" was the sarcastic reply. A whispered conversation ensued, and then a mop of dark hair peered over the fence and looked quickly at the blue eyes of John.

Many an evening John saw the same figure peering, rather watching, the growth of his potatoes. So often did he see her that he named her his "Potato Girl." He only saw her in the evening, it is true, but he managed to catch her quite accidentally, yet not without purpose, one evening; and from that time on the appearance of the "Potato Girl" ruffled him. One evening he boldly exclaimed:

"This scene of last night tonight that I first saw you. Won't you tell me your name?"

"With a toss of her head and a leap across the road, she laughingly replied: 'Oh, 'Potato Girl' is enough for me.'"

"But, my dear, you are not a potato girl, are you?"

"And there the luckless Sandy repeats in defiance of the day that he paraded as a lady dress artist. And called down maledictions from heaven high on those who send their riddles to the press in a paper's skirt that flouts the breeze, though they are wobbly at the knees, or miss in the Passing Show."

"If this was last year I might think it over, but as it isn't, is it true potato-

toes grow down deep in your heart, too? She was a good runner, and consequently John had to chase her around the well several times before he captured her for her answer."

The wedding day was set for the latter part of August, yet John was not so happy as he would have been if he had known her right name. He had to promise to know it the day of the wedding. A week before the appointed day she returned to her winter home to prepare for a reception. When she came to the house by a servant. He was still just as ignorant as ever as to her name. The revelation came when she descended the stairs to greet him. With another leap and a bound, this time a race around the house, and finally the capturing of her, he exclaimed:

"Edith, how could you?" A long story followed which Edith told him, and which had told her that she was the kind of a man to have. These city boys, said he, are no earthly use."

"John, it is all true," she ended. "I have loved you ever since I was a girl. I gave you up before."

A happier couple could not be found anywhere. The wedding was held and returned to the country a week later in a shower of potatoes greeted them. John's potatoes were one grand success. They furnished their home and the farmers around. Many a time John goes about grinning down deep in his heart potatoes grow for there is such a song he says.

"Tomorrow's Complete Novelette—'THE DIFFERENCE IN THE KHAKI'"

The Sorrows of Sandy

Long-legged Sandy Simpson, by a his gods he swore that he never knew a girl who did not love him. When he was shivered in the morning and he shivered through the day, as the day breaks that issue forth from the snowed roof knock down the chimney, a well-aimed shot. The observer is provided with map, glasses, telephone and a notebook.

What the Observer Sees

Looking through his peephole the observer sees immediately before him his own trench system, then No Man's Land, torn by shell holes and filled with rusty barbed wire. Beyond this runs the regular line of the front parapet of the enemy, and behind this the enemy's reserve and communicating trenches. Still further back is a country dotted with ruined farms and clumps of trees short of their branches. To the casual observer there is no sign of movement in this scene of desolation. The observer sees many things through his glasses—things which sometimes help to anticipate attacks from the enemy.

The second night after our return to the front line, the enemy's attack was a heavy barrage into the German front line. An attack was anticipated, and the trench system was being shifted. It didn't come off. For forty minutes we pumped shells over No Man's Land, making in many yards, the beach front line and preventing the enemy from going over the top.

The back batteries, located about 6500 yards away, began to reply hotly. Shells hit all around us, blowing up dugouts and blasting big holes in the landscape. I kept at my gun until it was too hot to hold, and then I went to the trench, where I was with my freckles. But he didn't have a chance; my freckles and red hair are the badge of the fighting de Varilas, and I wouldn't part with them for anything.

(TO BE CONTINUED TOMORROW)

TRENCH TALK (Continued from yesterday)

GAS. The general name given to the various kinds of poisonous or tear-producing gases sent over against the enemy. It is given the name of shells or from cylinders in which the gas is compressed and released from the trench, which is blown against the opposing forces by a favorable wind.

GAS MASK. The name given to the protective device which the soldier puts over his head when a gas attack is given. The soldier breathes through a chemical compound, which renders the gas harmless.

GOAT. The disrespectful name given to a junior officer, which the soldier is careful never to mention in his presence.

"GOD, WEST." The same as "God, West."

GRINACE. A small bomb, one form of which is mounted on a stick to be shot from a rifle and another an oval ball, which is thrown from the hand. The latter form has a lever which reaches down the side of the bomb and is grasped by the hand.

HANGAR. A house or shed built to house airplanes.

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THE FIRST SHOT

By Corporal Osborne De Varila BATTERY C, SIXTH U.S. FIELD ARTILLERY who fired the first shot of the American Army

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CHAPTER XV (Continued) SOMETIMES it seemed to me as if the whole front slept, or had been abandoned by men, so dead was the silence that reigned. But at these times I found that the watchfulness was of the keenest, and that more is to be learned of the enemy and his plans than in periods when there is greater activity.

The first necessity of war is observation of the enemy's line. Upon the evidence produced day by day, by piecing together the reports of thousands of observers, the whole tactical scheme is hunted out.

For every mile of front many pairs of eyes are perpetually watching, each an occasional scrap of information, here or there, seemingly insignificant in itself, but actually a fiber in the great web of knowledge that grows continually from all far-off headquarters.

It means to attack, if he means to attack, he will bring up and retain a large number of troops in the trenches. The enemy's plan is to be reduced. A massing of batteries movement behind the front line, gets the relief of a division. It is by the continual consideration of these things that a commander decides the plans of his opponent.

The ordinary everyday observation is made under three main headings—ground observations, kite balloons and airplanes.

The ground observation work is done in ground posts, and the duty of the men in these stations is to keep their eyes peeled every minute on the enemy's front-line trench system. Sometimes the observer is concealed in a dugout on the side of a hill, or he may be perched on the top of a chimney, with a hostile battery, trying every minute to knock down the chimney with a well-aimed shot. The observer is provided with map, glasses, telephone and a notebook.

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